(c) The following steps have been taken by the railway to improve crashworthiness of coaches:

(i) An inter-Railway coach competition was held to generate innovative ideas for improvement of coach interiors and fittings to make them injury free. Based on short listed innovations. 51 modification have been adopted for incorporating on new coaches and retrofitment on existing ones.

(ii) A project has been initiated to develop crashworthy coach bodies through computer simulation which will be validated by actual crash tests.

(iii) Design of coach body for change over from screw coupling to centre buffer type coupler with anti climbing feature to prevent coaches from riding on one another in case of accidents is also being developed for new generated coaches.

Electricity for Railways from SEBs

† 394. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railway have to purchase electricity worth approximately 4500 crores of rupees from the State Electricity Boards, to run electric trains and, this electricity is sold to Railways on high price.

(b) whether it is also a fact that some of the State Electricity Boards are not paying even the coal transportation charges to the railways;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the effective steps being taken by Government to overcome the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir. Railways have purchased electricity worth Rs. 3568 crores during the year 2001 -2002 for running electric trains. The State Electricity Boards are selling electricity to Railways at prices, even higher than their cost of supply at Extra High Tension (EHT).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The details of the outstanding recoverable from State Electricity Boards to the end of April, 2002 are given in Statement. (See below)

(d) Following steps are being taken by the Government to overcome the problem:

(i) The matter of outstanding against State Electricity Boards has been followed up regularly with the Ministry of Power, Ministry of Finance and with the Chief Ministers of various States.

(ii) The outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards as on 31.12.1996 are also being adjusted from the Central Plan Assistance of the State Governments subject to certain limits.

(iii) The outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards to the Railways are being adjusted against traction bills, wherever feasible.

(iv) Recently, a scheme for 'one time settlement of SEB dues' by issuing of bonds has been approved by the Union Cabinet. Signing of tripartite agreement with the concerned State Governments and Reserve Bank of India is under process.

Statement

Dues recoverable from State Electricity Boards to end of April '2002

(Rs. in crores)

SI. No.	Name of State Electricity Boards	Total outstanding			Freight outstanding		
		32002	42001	42002	32002	42001	42002
1.	Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board	0.82	11.08	1.76	0.82	8.69	1.76
2.	Assam State Electricity Board	0.18	1.59	0.18	0.18	1.59	0.18
3.	Bihar State Electricity Board	0.02	0.68	0.40	0.01	0.50	0.19
4.	Delhi Vidyut Board	160.86	143.30	163.38	160.43	143.18	162.91
5.	Gujart State Electricity Board	0.45	196.54	1.75	0	195.07	0.95

		32002	42001	42002	32002	420001	42002
6.	Haryana State Electricity Board	5.33	41.00	1.97	5.3	40.84	1.64
7.	Karnataka State Electricity Board	0.03	0.21	0.33	0	0.00	0.00
8.	Maharashtra State Electricity Board	0.43	15.39	9.07	0.2	13.30	6.97
9.	Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board	2.99	2.35	14.96	2.4	0.93	8.63
10.	Punjab State Electricity Board	325.31	217.29	365.32	325.3	23.37	363.91
11.	Rajasthan State Electricity Board	105.75	87.28	107.33	105.3	25.20	106.78
12.	Tamil Nadu State Electricity Board	0.59	17.60	0.67	0.41	8.21	0.46
13.	Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board	8.27	5.29	22.65	7.77	5.33	2179
14.	West Bengal State Electricity Board	4.21	26.09	19.42	3.57	21.41	17.38
	Total:	615.24	765.69	709.19	611.69	487.62	693.55

Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train

395. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed recently with the Spanish Railways for undertaking feasibility studies for introduction of a builet train between Mumbai and Ahmedbad;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal finalised;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in a similar study for theDelhi-Mumbai route, carried out earlier by the Japan, it was found that such a proposal was neither practicable nor financially viable and the project was abandoned; and